

Top Tips for Fundraising in a recession

- ❖ **Don't panic!** You may even find new opportunities opening up in these difficult times.
- ❖ **Strengthen your 'case for support'**, the reasons for giving to you. People don't want to hear about how the recession is affecting your organisation. Focussing on gloom makes people hang onto their wallets. Keep your focus on your mission and its benefits. Tell stories about the impact of your work. There's no tonic like good news and people give to success. Illustrate how tough times make your vision even more relevant and important. It's not about you and your institutional hardship.
- ❖ If you haven't paid attention to developing a case for support, **do it now!** And keep it fresh. For more info and help with how to do this go to two other fundraising pages on www.fwbo-centre-support.org on The Case for Support and An Introductory Guide to Fundraising.
- ❖ **Make you centre/project efficient.** In the nice and easy years it's easy to get a little overweight. And things that should be sorted get left. Cut costs the smart way. Communicate prudent management steps. But communicate this as a secondary message. Avoid anything that your supporters and donors will perceive as wasteful. Focus on your strengths. Find creative solutions that don't always depend on money.
- ❖ **But don't cut fundraising!** Whether we like it or not, fundraising needs resources: time and money. Fundraising efforts don't raise money by being eliminated!
- ❖ Have a relaxed and compassionate understanding of people's financial realities but **don't apologise for asking.** A request for money, or other support, is an opportunity for your donors to validate their cherished values.
- ❖ **Do everything you can to hang onto existing donors.** We don't have a very good track record of donor care in the FWBO – please don't take generosity for granted. Understand the 'life-time value', for example, of people who are giving you standing orders. Check out the January 2009 Fundraising Kula guidelines on donor care.
- ❖ Generosity comes in many forms, not just money, so **cherish your volunteers too.**

Leading people in good times is easy. It's in the tough times that your **leadership** mettle will be tested. When finances get tight and projects are threatened, people can become easily de-motivated and worried about the future.

- ❖ **Be honest about the realities – and confident about the possibilities.** We have all sorts of resources. Focus on the skills, experience and abilities of your people. Those don't change just because times are tough. Remind people what they're good at. Highlight success. Give positive feedback to your teachers, staff and volunteers and share that widely. **Appreciation is powerful.**
- ❖ **Do all this – especially strengthen your case for support – and all will be well!**

Siddhisambhava
FWBO Fundraiser, February 2009